

Russians used microw

By JACK ANDERSON
WASHINGTON — Hidden in the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) most secret files is an account of a possible Soviet attempt to "brainwash" our embassy personnel in Moscow with mysterious microwaves.

The fantastic details are contained in a file marked "Operation Pandora," which describes how the Russians bombarded our embassy with eerie, low-radiation impulses. Their secret intent, it was suspected, may have been to alter the personalities of our diplomats.

The bizarre story began in 1945 when a Russian presented Averill Harriman, then our ambassador, with a handsome carved Great Seal of the United States. Harriman proudly hung it in the embassy.

The seal contained a tiny electronic eavesdropping device, which monitored conversations inside the embassy until 1952, when it was detected. From this shocking discovery came urgent orders that all em-

bassies must be periodically checked for electronic signals.

In the '60s, U.S. security men discovered the strange microwave impulses, some steady, some pulsating, directed into our Moscow embassy from a neighboring building.

The CIA quickly learned that Russian medical literature suggested microwaves can cause nervous tension, irritability, even disorders. They speculated that the Russians were trying to drive American diplomats stir crazy from the waves.

Neither the CIA nor the State Department had the facilities to test the effects of the silent rays on human beings. At the Pentagon, however, the super-secret Advanced Research Project Agency had worked on electronic sensors and other weird projects.

The agency quietly began a study, under the direction of Richard Cesaro, into the effects of microwaves on people. Cesaro gave the

project the code name, "Operation Pandora," and called in a physician, Dr. Herb Pollack, and two crack military scientists, Dr. Joseph Sharp of Walter Reed Army hospital, and engineer-microwave expert Mark Grove of the Air Force.

Sharp and Grove, supplied with the microwave data monitored in the embassy, duplicated the embassy environment, using monkeys for diplomats.

THE monkeys actually were trained to perform tasks and then were rewarded with food, much as embassy employees might be rewarded with a dry martini at the end of the day.

The monkeys were studied night and day for months at Walter Reed, while a collateral experiment was also conducted on rabbits by consultant Dr. Milton Zaret in his own laboratory.

In the embassy in Moscow, meanwhile, no one except the highest diplomats and security men were aware of the secret microwave drama.

By 1967, the scientists felt they had watched the monkeys long enough for a tentative reading. Some felt there were signs of "aberrant behavior" caused by the microwaves, but the majority disagreed. Only the rabbits showed clear changes — in their heart rate — which Zaret attributed to heat from the rays.

The disagreement on psychological changes were sent to a top secret reviewing board, which also could reach no absolute conclusion that the rays affected the monkeys' minds.

Nevertheless, the suspicion lingered, and the White House decided that even if the microwaves were not "brainwashing" embassy people, they should be halted. It was also suspected that the waves might be part of some radical new surveillance technique.

At the June 1967 Glassboro meeting between President Lyndon Johnson and Soviet Premier Aleksel Kosygin, the question of the microwave rays came up. One informant

insists Johnson personally asked Kosygin to end the ray bombardment, although other sources say the request was made at a lower level.

By 1968, most of Cesaro's scientists were convinced that the microwaves were not psychologically harmful and the embassy experiments ended in early 1969.

The brilliant work done by the team, however, has now led to important research on the effects of microwaves. So far, tests show high radiation can injure eyes, genital organs and perhaps other parts of the body. But, as yet, there is no conclusive proof that low-level radiation is harmful.

Footnote: We have spoken with Cesaro, Pollack, Sharp, Zaret and Grove. All acknowledge they worked on "Operation Pandora," but all refuse to go into details. As Sharp put it: "Pandora was classified in those days and still is."

AUTO POLLUTION

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has eased up on the car makers all over the country.